

Late Maulana Muhammad Yusuf

(JIH President from 1972 till 1981)

Maulana Muhammad Yusuf son of Maulana Tafazzal Hussain was born on 19th January 1908 in Bans Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh. He completed B.A. with Economics (honours) from Allahabad University, obtained master degree M.A. in Economics from the same university and received LL.B. Subsequently, he was appointed a Reader to the Allahabad High court Judge. When he heard the clarion call given by renowned Islamic scholar and founder of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Maulana Syed Abul Ala Maudoodi, he joined the organisation and was granted its membership in 1946. Later, Maulana Yusuf relinquished the government job and dedicated himself for the Jamaat. Within a month he launched a famous Urdu weekly 'Al-Insaaf' in Sept. 1947 and he became its founder editor.

After the independence of the country, a separate organisation – Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH) was formed in India in Allahabad in April 1948. Maulana Yusuf participated in the first meeting for the formation of JIH and was appointed its first Secretary General by its first president Maulana Abul Lais Islahi Nadvi. Later on, he was elected the JIH president in 1972 and continued in office for consecutive two terms till 1981.

During his presidency, two all India conferences – Delhi conference in 1974 and Hyderabad conference in 1981- were held. The most important achievement of the Jamaat during his tenure was the boost to the rendering of the Quran in twelve regional languages of India. He also played leading role in starting most of the periodicals in several languages of the country during his tenure. The Board of Islamic Publications, Delhi, under which English weekly Radiance runs, was established in 1963 and the Maulana Yusuf was its founder president. He was also instrumental in introducing the JIH to the Muslim world, particularly Arab countries.

He was a member of the working committee of the Rabita Al-Alam and World Mosques Council.

Maulana Yusuf played a key role in the formation of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, All India Muslim Majlis-e Mushawarat and Deeni Taleemi Council.

During his tenure, 21-month black period of emergency was proclaimed from 1975 to 1977 and the JIH was declared unlawful and its members sent behind the bars. Its offices were sealed. Maulana Yusuf, who was also imprisoned, constantly gave courage and advised detainees and their relatives to maintain perseverance and tolerance through his letters from the prison.

Maulana Yusuf was so well-versed in Arabic, English and Urdu that he used to speak and write fluently in these languages. His work Urdu book 'Yalaita Qaumi Valumuona' throws light on the hard days, the JIH faced after former Pakistan PM Z.A. Bhutto's execution in 1979. He left for Rampur, in 1982 and lived there till his death on July 4, 1991, after a prolonged illness.

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